

LOUISIANA WILD LIFE AND FISHERIES COMMISSION

P R O C E E D I N G S

BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, September 5, 1973

10:00 A. M.

JIMMIE THOMPSON, PRESIDING

Sheraton Bossier Inn
Bossier City, Louisiana

P R O C E E D I N G S

. . . The Special Board Meeting of the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission convened at 10:00 o'clock a. m. on Wednesday, September 5, 1973, at the Sheraton Bossier Inn, Bossier City, Louisiana, Jimmie Thompson, presiding

PRESENT WERE:

JIMMIE THOMPSON

CLAY LUTTRELL

MARC DUPUY, JR.

DONALD WILLE

J. BURTON ANGELLE, DIRECTOR

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A G E N D A

MR. KENNETH SMITH

1. Discussion of drawdown on Lake Bisteneau.

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THE CHAIRMAN: We'll call the meeting to order. I'd like to first tell you how proud and pleased we are to be up here and I'd like to introduce to you the members of our Commission that are here and possibly in an apologetic manner, three members who are not.

I'm Jimmie Thompson. I'm substituting for Mr. Jerry Jones, who is our Chairman, Mr. Lloyd Autin, who is our Vice Chairman and Mr. Doyle Berry, is not here. All three of these people are tied

up with the hurricane. In fact, Mr. Jones tells us this morning by telephone that there is a foot of water in the street in front of his house. I think that you could readily understand and will excuse them for not being present here today. They were most desirous of being here.

I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce to you our members that are here . On my extreme right, Mr. Marc Dupuy from Marksville, Louisiana. We have next to him, Mr. Burt Angelle, our most able Director. Mr. Clay Luttrell is on my left and we have our newest member, he won't be a new person to you people in this room but he is to the group of us here. We are looking forward to great things from Mr. Don Wille, who is sitting immediately on the left. (clapping.)

At this time, I would like for Mr. Angelle, if he will, to introduce to you the personnel of the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission so that if you have any questions and so forth you will know who they are. Burt, would you do this please?

MR. ANGELLE: Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Good morning ladies and gentlemen. Guess we are here to save your Lake Bistineau and these are some of the people that will provide us the information from the Wild Life and Fisheries..

Some of the technical people with us is the Assistant Director, Mr. Dick Yancey. Dick, would you stand up. Mr. Bob Kimball, District Supervisor, Game Division District I. Mr. Kenneth Smith, Chief of our Fish Division. Mr. Charlie Hoenke, Fisheries

Biologist, District I; Mr. Louis Richardson, Aquatic Biologist; Mr. Bob Smothers, our Communications Technician; and our two pilots, Mr. Leo Rodriguez and Mr. Nelson Summerall. These people are at your disposal today and if at any time we can be of any help and service to you please feel free to call on us. Jimmie, that terminates the introduction of our personnel.

MR. THOMPSON: Fine, Burt. I think it is well known that the purpose of this meeting is the discussion of the drawdown of Lake Bistineau. I'd like to in the beginning set out some of the ground rules that we'll try to play by here today. I think that since the proponents of a no drawdown are the ones who have most vigorously requested this meeting that we will hear from them first and the opponents can come back behind them. I'd like to say at this time too that anyone who speaks will be recognized by the chair. Come to the microphone and it is most important that you give your name and whom you represent, if you represent an organization or a group of people. We will not hear from people on the floor; you will have to come to the microphone. We have plenty of chairs in the back here if you will just come on in and have a seat. Someone at the door, if you happen to see any late comers come in, if you will tell them this. Before we get into the discussion, I'd like to call on our new member, Mr. Don Wille, who has a few words and remarks he would like to make. Don.

MR. DON WILLE: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I appreciate it. We were talking about the proponents of the Lake. We don't want you to stand up right now because I feel if we do, why we are going to have everyone in the room standing. We know that we are here today to discuss Lake Bistineau. That is the primary cause of our meeting today.

First of all, before we get down to the business, Mr. James Barksdale, who is the Administrative Assistant, City Coordinator, works about four different hands I understand down at City Hall right now, is substituting for Mayor Cathey and he would like to welcome the Commission. This happens to be the first meeting that we have ever had in North Louisiana in the history of the Wild Life and Fisheries. So, Mr. Barksdale I would like to turn it over to you.

MR. JAMES BARKSDALE: Thank you Don. On behalf of the Mayor, the City Council and the people of Bossier City, we do wish to extend our hearty greetings to the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission for selecting our city to hold this meeting and to all of you that have business today, we wish that they had brought better weather from South Louisiana with them when they came up here. It is a great day for ducks so we hope that you will enjoy your stay with us and come back to see us again. Thank you.

MR. WILLE: Thank you James. Mr. Chairman, I would like to turn the meeting back over to you sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you a lot. We certainly appreciate that warm welcome. I do have to make one correction to Don. We have had meetings here before. Some very heated meetings I might say. I remember when Mr. Fleming, I believe it was, was here and we came at his request shortly after he was off the Board and boy, did he eat us up. He knew what he was talking about. Suppose we go right into the discussion now and I'll ask that anyone who would like to speak if you will raise your hand you will be recognized.

I would like to also say that because of the essence of time we would like to not have any repetition if it can be so handled that way. Those who would like to speak, if someone on the proponents side would raise your hand, we will call you to the microphone at this time. Could I hold up one moment. We have Marc Dupuy, our most able attorney and commission member, has a few remarks to make in reference to what we are here for and in a little more depth. Marc, would you take the mike at this time.

MR . MARC DUPUY: Thank you, Jimmy. Ladies and gentlemen. During the meeting of the Commission in August the Board considered recommendations of its biologists for a drawdown of the water levels of Lake Bistineau. The agenda of the regular meetings are published in advance by news media throughout the state and the sole consideration for our discussing Lake Bistineau in August was what was best for Lake Bistineau.

The Board considered the recommendations of the biologists for a drawdown of 4 inches a day until 7 feet have been withdrawn and a beginning date of Labor Day, or after Labor Day. The purpose is first to retarded the growth of underwater aquatics which cover in excess of twenty percent of the lake for improved usage of that portion of the Lake throughout the remainder of the year.

Secondly, to take advantage of the lowered water levels for the removal stumps in boat lanes and areas of active water travel for safety and, of course for more enjoyment of the lake.

Thirdly, to take advantage of the lowered levels to construct a public boat launching ramp with funds constituting approximately 80% Dingell-Johnson federal monies that have been budgeted by the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission for some time in the past.

And, fourthly, of course, to maintain a balanced fish population. Now, I don't recall at the meeting of the Commission in August any single person appearing before the Commission either for or against the proposed drawdown. The biologists recommendations appeared to be reasonable, logical and sound and the Commission voted unanimously to begin a drawdown and to begin it on September 4. Now, I understand that the decision may not have been a very popular one with some segments of the sporting population and as Mr. Thompson has said this meeting

has been called for purposes of considering a delay in the beginning date of the proposed drawdown. We would like to have your views and we would like to listen to you first and then we will have our biologists to restate for your benefit the considerations and the factors that we took into consideration and the reasons why the Board acted in the manner it did. So if you gentlemen are ready we will be happy to hear from you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. That is most ably stated and I think 100 per cent correct. Yes sir.

MR. BILL WILLIAMS: One question, sir. You stated at the meeting that no one appeared before your committee the day of it's meeting. I have one question that I would like to ask. Did the Commission receive a telegram asking for a delay in the lowering of the Lake.

THE CHAIRMAN: Not to my knowledge. Any of the other members? Do you remember a telegram of that nature? Marc? We have no recollection of it.

MR. WILLIAMS: We did wire them requesting our....

THE CHAIRMAN: We did receive the wire. This was taken into consideration.

MR. WILLIAMS: But it did not get before the Commission. Is this right?

THE CHAIRMAN: I don't remember.

MR. WILLIAMS: This was the same request that was put before the Commission last August when there was a contingent down there at that time so we felt that at least our wishes were being expressed by wire. And once again we also felt that we need some representation from North Louisiana so that the people could have a voice down there. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes sir. I might mention that Mr. Angelle tells me that and I do remember now that Kenneth or Mr. Williams, possibly both, did say that we had correspondence from both sides. Proponents and opponents for this. All right, the gentleman over here. If you will come to the microphone please sir.

While he is coming to the mike let me tell you this. I see that we had a little argumentive deal right here at the beginning. Please bear in mind that we are up here, this group, and I can speak I think for the entire group. We are here for one purpose and for one purpose only and that's wildlife and fisheries and whatever it encompasses. We don't sit here in any other vein than to have the best for wildlife and fisheries.

MR. RALPH VEILLON: We thank you for your coming up here to hear our squabble this morning but how long does it take to realize a failure of the drawdown on Lake Bistineau.

THE CHAIRMAN: Did you state your name?

MR. VEILLON: Ralph Veillon. We've gone through the drawdown on Lake Bistineau for eight years. It first started off on a five-year project. They drew our lake down for five years. Our

moss has consistently gotten worse. They didn't draw it down last year and our moss is in a better shape this year. We get the fish this year in spots we couldn't prior to that. The lowering of the lake each year taking the water away just allows the moss to sink to the bottom of the lake. Whereby with the concentration of the lake and the dews that fall on any swampy area still leaves the banks of the lake moist whereby in the spring of the year the moss returns just like it has in the years before the drawdown. We should be looking for instead of a drawdown or lowering the lake and losing the fish, we should be looking for a solution with some chemical company to kill the moss to eradicate it for good.

Now we claim we've got fish in Arkansas that eats the moss. Yet, we have been told that we don't want to try that here for fear that they might get into the streams and get down to the marsh and the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission don't know what it would do to our marshes. Well, we are as concerned over the marshes up here in North Louisiana as you are in South Louisiana. The main thing we want to do is to restock the lake instead of the drawdowns and to come up here and give us something instead of taking it away for us. We are all in favor of leaving the lake alone. Stopping the drawdowns on it. Thank you sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: Who would like to be next. I knew we had a lady that was going to say something up here. Look like for a minute we had a meeting for one speech.

MRS. BRUMFIELD: We thank you ever so much for coming. I have two acres over on the east side of the lake. As loud as I talk, son, you don't need a tape. But, nevertheless there are several questions in our minds for many of these draw-down years and I want to ask them. I may not get an answer. Who owns the land under the water when the water goes out on the draw-down? Does the lake own it? Does the state own it? Does the man who has property in front of it own it?

THE CHAIRMAN: I wouldn't be in a position to answer that at this time. I do know that there is some litigation probably in reference to this same question. I don't know that answer. No mam, perhaps someone else does. We will ask them to answer it at a later time. I think this is all in a quandry. We had the same quandry that you are in.

MRS. BRUMFIELD: Good. Then I want to know when you answer the question as to who owns the land under the water, then I'll want to know who owns the cypress in it because there has been thousands of yards of gravel gotten out of it. Every year the water goes down, thousands of feet of cypress every time it goes down. Does the state get it or do the individuals get it that have some political pull.

THE CHAIRMAN: I'll answer you as best as I know how. And this is only by way of hearsay and I'm told and I don't think the state gets any of the money in answer to your last question. I'm told that the land owners actually own the bottom of the lake up to the Bayou that runs through it. Now I

don't know the correct answer. This is the way I hear it.

MRS. BRUMFIELD: I posted my property in Bienville Parish Courthouse because I have 240 feet front, two acres. They told me I didn't own 20 feet from my property back to the water's edge. It was the median. From there on it was state property. Now I want to know.

THE CHAIRMAN: Well, I can't answer it. Possibly, we can find an answer for you. I don't know. Can any one of our members here answer that. I don't think we can. We'll skip over your answer. Maybe we can get some information and send it to you, if we have your name. Do we have your address. 3504 Lillian Street, Shreveport, Louisiana 71109. We'll try to get you some information on that. We might in the meantime refer you to the Register of State Lands who could give you this answer. This would definitely come under their jurisdiction. I would rather get it from you all because it affects the lake.

Please bear this in mind. We are going to vote. If we take a vote today, which I think we will, we're going to vote for whatever we judge or weigh this thing to be the best for the lake and for the most of the people and all of the people. Does that meet with your approval all right.

MR. CLAYTON CORNISH: I'm Clayton Cornish from 4516 South Fairway Drive, Shreveport, Louisiana. I have a camp on Bistineau on the east side about 300 yards from Toulon Bayou. My brother-in-law and wife and I bought it in 1963. That year they

let the lake down and, of course, the next spring the moss was there. Then they missed it a year. We couldn't even get our boat away from our boathouse which was 100 feet out in the water. The children we had down there couldn't even paddle their boats. Now I admit that this year, which I didn't get to fish very much, there is very little moss but over the years I think we are going to have to give consideration for the drawdown year before last to what we got this year. Mark my word, if we don't draw the lake down at least some of the time, we are going to have moss continuously all over the lake.

There is a place called Little Cypress Break just below our camp, and for years you couldn't even get in there. This year we could but last year after the drawdown the moss did not go in there until about the latter part of July. Got to where you couldn't get in. I'm not a biologist, although I did teach biology for 20 years. The children said I wasn't. I feel that we need to have a drawdown. I know that these people that have camps, when there is a drawdown they are a quarter of a mile from the lake. I can see your point, but give us a chance.

Well, maybe this year we won't draw it down. Next year I think that you will ask for Wild Life and Fisheries to draw it down because we are going to have our moss come back. It always has. Now, I'm voting to draw it down. I'm sure that I have several people in this audience here that want it drawn down because of the fact that I think we have enough fish in the lake. Mr. Young said that we need to restock. I have a pier

that runs out into the lake 200 feet and I have seen as many as ten thousand little bass come right beside our pier. I'm not going to tell you where I live. (laughter.) I should have brought my fish here that I caught right in front of my camp. It's a 9 lb. 17 oz. No, it's a 4 lb. bass.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Mr. Luttrell seems to know you fairly well. He says you played a pretty good game of football in his day.

MR. LUTTRELL: He may not be a biologist, ladies and gentlemen, but he throws a mean javelin, I'll tell you.

THE CHAIRMAN: May we ask just for the proponents at the present time. We will come for the opponents next, so if you are a proponent. Are you a proponent? All right, sir. I might explain what I'm saying. A proponent of what. Since this meeting was called to consider not drawing it down, a proponent of not drawing it down.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: The delay in drawing it down or are we talking about a drawdown.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are really not talking about anything. We are just talking about whatever comes out of this meeting. We are going to vote for or against, whether it's delayed, drawdown, or raised 20 ft., I don't know. I can't answer that question.

MR. JOHN REED: So you understand exactly which side I'm on. I'm against drawing it down. I'm John Reed. I live in Shreveport. I have a private camp down on Bistineau that I have had for ten years. I fished Bistineau for 20 or 25 years. I'm very much against a drawdown for the reason that in front of my camp, which is on the main channel, when the lake is lowered to whatever level it has been lowered the last few years the sediment in the lake settles to the bottom and the water becomes very crystal clear. I can take you down there and show you some grains of sand on the bottom. When sunlight hits the earth and pieces of moss drop off somebody's propeller, it's going to root and grow.

Each year that it has drawn down in front of my camp, which is right at the mouth of Brushy Bayou where the lake turns there, each year that they lower it the moss goes further and further out into the lake. Now last year we didn't have a drawdown and as one of the gentlemen has previously stated, I have been able to fish in some pockets and areas I haven't been in a number of years. I've seen and I believe I'm guessing a little bit but I fish every week down there. I've just retired last week and I hope I can get to fish some more down there, but I have seen more fingerling bass this spring and this summer in Lake Bistineau than I have seen in many, many years down there. I have caught more fish down there.

The constant lowering of it in my estimation only succeeds in spreading the moss and I invite any of you gentlemen at my expense to come down to my camp. If you draw the lake down and after the water has been down for several months the moss appears to be dead. If you go out there and take ahold of it and pull it out of the ground and it has from 12 to 18 inch root structure. Very long threadlike roots and all its doing is just resting this winter so it can get a good start next spring when you let the water back in. So, I am very much opposed to the drawdown of Lake Bistineau. Thank you.

MR. PAUL HAGENS: Mr. name is Paul Hagens. I am a camp owner and also happen to be a director of Lake Bistineau Improvement Society. The question I would like to put forth and to put at rest something that has bugged us for years in discussing the pros and cons of Bistineau and that is the gravel situation and I think Mrs. Brumfield was hinting at this when she was up here.

I, too, am not a biologist, so I am not going to argue the pros and cons of the biology of the lake but for years the thing that has bugged many of us down there is the possibility of private interests owning the mineral rights in part of the lake and applying political pressure for a non-objective approach to the improvement of Lake Bistineau. I would like for you, I think this would be an opportune time to do it

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for the record, to officially say that to your knowledge this is not true. I mean I can go out and put this issue to rest right now and then talk about the biology.

THE CHAIRMAN: O. K. I would like to put that issue to rest. I certainly would because this seems to be a direct insinuation toward this Board and I can answer for myself and I think for the rest of the people of the Board and I'll let them answer if they so wish. I have never so much as been in contact, spoken to, introduced to, talked to, know of or even who it is that has one iota of gravel. I know nothing. I have had no political pressure. I haven't even had a word from our biologists in reference to gravel. I want that crystal clear on my part because personally I, well, I'll ask anyone else on the Board if they would like to make any comments on this.

MR. LUTTRELL: Mr. Thompson, I would like to say this that I am up in this district quite a bit and last night was the first time that I had heard of or knew that there was any gravel in the bottom or that anyone was taking it out. I'll state further as one Board Member, I'd like to find out who owns it and if it belongs to the state, I think that we should get something out of it or stop it and I prefer stopping it.

MR. DUPUY: I would like to say very much the same comments that until last night I knew of no gravel problem. Matter of fact, until August of this year I never

knew of any problem at all with regard to Lake Bistineau and if gravel is being taken from below the high water mark of Lake Bistineau and it is state owned water bottoms then we will determine if the state owns it and if so, why gravel has been taken. If it is under private ownership, then that's a different situation.

Same thing is true with regard to cypress as Mrs. Brumfield said. If the lake is privately owned or portions of the lake are privately owned, then that's their problem; private ownership is entitled. So long as it's state owned water bottoms, we will do something about that.

THE CHAIRMAN: I would like to say one thing while I have it on my mind and come right back to you. I probably have the longest longevity on this board at this meeting today and at no time in my recollection have we ever issued a permit. And any public owned land you have to have a permit to either wash gravel, or whatever you do, or dredge or whatever, and to my recollection there has never been a permit. In fact, I know this, issued to anyone on Lake Bistineau to mine gravel. Excuse me, Don, I had to bring that out.

MR. WILLE: The only thing that I wanted to say is that three years ago, I went up to the lake when they were getting ready to lower it and took pictures and approximately three days before the lowering was to start they had already built in the roads right up to the waters edge and had it all

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prepared and ready to go and the day that the lake started
goind gown 4 inches is the day they started dredging. I guarantee
you they are dredging gravel out of Lake Bistineau. Gentlemen,
I'm for stopping it. Of course, you know/what my position is here
today. I think I stated that last night and I told you last
night that this was happening within the lake.

THE CHAIRMAN: I'm going to have to tell you
one thing. You really want to stop drawing that lake down.
We have another gentleman. Glad to see Mr. Bonner coming in.
Incidentally, the last meeting we had here Mr. Bonner was in
attendance and if you will remember, we had a Commission meeting.
Mr. Bonner. He remembers.

MR. VINET: I'm Mr. Vinet. I live in
Shreveport. We also have property on Bistineau. In 1968 or 1969,
I made a record check of the records of Webster Parish and found
that the property upon which the gravel is being taken is owned
by the Bistineau Webster Oil and Gas Company. The prime mover
or owner of this Bistineau Webster Oil and Gas Company is Louis
Gottlieb of Baton Rouge. Louis Gottlieb in 1969 leased that
property to Gifford Hill for several thousand dollars for the
purpose of extracting gravel and sand from the pits. Of course,
Louis Gottlieb also there is a clause you can read it, that states
that Louis Gottlieb gets 15¢ per square yard of gravel and sand
removed from those pits.

Each year that the lake is lowered those cranes

go into the bottom of those pits because the water drains into the bottom of those pits because the water drains into the lake which allows them to extract more and mine more of this material. Now, I think the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission is correct saying that they have never issued any licenses, etc., for the extraction of gravel and sand but they have no right to if there is no reason for Louis Gottlieb to put their equipment into the lake. If it is owned by Louis Gottlieb, and that's where the lease came from Louis Gottlieb to Gifford Hill, this is just to put the matter straight. Thank you, sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is all of record, I understand in the courthouse.

MR. VINET: Courthouse in Webster Parish.

THE CHAIRMAN: All right. Who would like to be next? The young lady in the back there.

MRS. KORMAN: I'm Mrs. Korman. 791 Thor Street. We appreciate you and, especially Mr. Wille. There are two or three, well, I could talk all day about Bistineau. We have had our place about 16 years. I am a diehard fisherman at Bistineau. I don't believe in going to Toledo because our accommodations and our happiness has been there. And I would like for it to continue to be there. But, it ruins our season when the nice weather comes in the fall and we can't fish. We can't get out our place.

We have water on our dredged canals for a

little ways and then no water for a number of yards. It's too dangerous to go out because of the stumps and there is no way of an individual coming in there and I don't want a commercial or any other person coming into our area, dredging or doing anything for us. We can take care of our own situation and we are not asking that but we are asking that we can have some pleasure to fish during the fall months because it gets pretty hot up here in the summer. Then our fall fishing, our school bass come in and our stripes. Most fun I ever had on Bistineau was during the Thanksgiving Holidays at one time and I got into those stripes one day and believe me, I'm living for the day when I can do it again.

Now, there are two or three questions that I would like to ask. The last two or three weeks that I have caught brim, they are full of eggs. What happens to their eggs if you lower this lake at this time. Or, do we have a chance that these fish, the little eggs can hatch and produce these for next years fish. All right now that's number one. And, you keep talking about lowering the lake year before last has helped our moss situation. I don't believe you. I disagree. Sixteen years we have watched this. I think the real reason that our moss situation has been better this year is because of the rainy season that we had all spring. It has kept the sun from coming out on our lake and on our moss to produce a good crop of moss that we have had from last rainy season. All right, number two. Well, number three. I guess I have already covered about the good weather and the fall fishing. We would like for you to

consider us, because we are pretty tired of having just a few weeks to enjoy our pleasures. I have a little girl and we have to ski them during the summer months when the weather can go for swimming and all this and I like to get my fall fishing in and I'd appreciate it. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: I certainly like to see these lady fishermen. They sure add something to any lake. Who would like to be next? I think I see a hand. Yes, mam. I might say too that Kenneth Smith, I know I see you taking notes and Kenneth Smith will try to answer some of these technical questions that are presented when he comes to the microphone. Kenneth be sure and make notes of these.

MRS. ELEANOR GANZY: I'm Eleanor Ganzy at 203 Pennsylvania. I think we are fortunate to have a lake as beautiful as Lake Bistineau so close to Shreveport. We can be fishing in Lake Bistineau when other people are still driving. I would like to ask if there has been any study of any correlation between the drawdowns and what it is doing to the cypress trees. It seems to me that the cypress trees have been dying faster since the drawdown has been started and I think that one of the things that make Bistineau so beautiful are the lovely woods in the lake. I think they should be taken into consideration and I think I would like to ask that a study be made of what this raising and lowering of the lake is doing to the cypress trees. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: I would surmise and this is just supposition on my part, that this would probably have to come from the Forestry Division. This would be more in their line and, however, if it does fit into our category, we'll see if we can't do something about giving you some information or maybe some of our people can answer this. Who would like to be next? No more proponents.

MR. BILL WILLIAMS: Mr. Chairman, my name is Bill Williams and I have long been a part of the Lake Bistineau Improvement Association. I, too, own a place down on Lake Bistineau and over the last couple of years we have formed an organization to improve the lake and we start saying improve the lake and this covers a multitude of things. I'd like to express my appreciation to you people coming up here and having a sympathetic ear.

I wish I had brought a few things that I probably could have presented you which may give you a better feeling. When we first started out we circulated a petition which simply asked for various improvements in the lake. I have in my files quite a few letters from people, primarily retired people, people that had perhaps sold their town property and moved to the lake. This was prior to these successive drawdowns and you would be surprised at the sentiment of these people. When you take a lake and take it completely out of circulation

for six months, and when I say completely I venture to say that only 20 per cent of the people can get into the lake and then I think they are in agreement that only a small horsepower engine to push you around is the best you can do. The lake is just absolutely out of commission from the initial drawdown which has been just customarily after Labor Day until January 15. Then we have the months of February, March and perhaps in April we begin to get a little use of the lake due to the weather and the rainy season filling it up. So we are talking about a tremendous investment by the State itself and by the property owners for a utilization of a recreational and a commercial-type piece of property in May, June, July and August. It's been a poor investment for just that kind of use.

Now, we have some authorities that tell us that there is no real factual information that drawdowns or leaving the lake up really has any affect on the aquatic growth. By the same token, we realize that we are facing a soon-to-be dead lake. We've got to come up with some answers - Wild Life and Fisheries has. We had a meeting with the Parks and Recreation people trying to secure a location to do some experimenting. They were so involved in their building a bigger and better place on the lake and I don't think we ever did understand that perhaps in ten years there won't even be a lake. The biologists that we have talked to tell us that quite conceivably the whole bottom

of the lake will come to the top and all your fish are dead and the whole thing goes down the drain, so whatever we decide here today is going to be a temporary measure and the answer is still way down the line. Now, I would like to clarify one thing, please. Are we talking about, is this meeting concerned with the public boat ramp as expenditures of money at this point? Do you want to discuss this? Is this primarily the --.

THE CHAIRMAN: No sir. I don't think that has anything to do with it other than the fact that if a drawdown is considered it would be the time to put the boat ramps in with the water down. Mr. Wille?

MR. WILLE: Yes. At the time, if we do have a drawdown at that time, I promise you that I will be down at the Commission trying to do something about this public program. I think that we can discuss that at that time.

MR. BILL WILLIAMS: The Association can go on record as being against any public funds being spent for public boat ramps when the money is needed very desperately for other things.

THE CHAIRMAN: Who would like to be next? I see someone way back there. We will switch probably shortly to the opponents if we--. You are an opponent? Do we have any more who are for leaving the water up. This gentleman here. You can be next sir.

MR. RAY MCGRAW: I'm Ray McGraw and I'm also a member of the Lake Bistineau Improvement Association. A lot of people don't realize that Lake Bistineau at one time was fed by Red River, that was the secret of all the fishing in Lake Bistineau. Every 5, 7, 6, 3 years the river would rise, they would come into the lake but since we've got -- the rest of them, that has not happened. One reason is the way the dam is constructed; it's straight down. In the spring of the year if the river does come up into Loggy Bayou and the lake is coming over the spillway which most lakes have a sloping spillway, the fish are naturally going to come up so that's one point people haven't realized that the stocking of Lake Bistineau has been the secret of Red River all these years.

THE CHAIRMAN: There is no question about that. You probably got some water this year, did you not, from the river. I don't know did you? Three times you did get water. The gentleman right here.

MR. JACK WILDER: My name is Jack Wilder. I'm from Shreveport, 420 West 69th Street. I'm not like some of these other gentlemen here that have property out on the lake but I do have a houseboat out there and I enjoy being next to my family and many friends. We go out there every year and almost every weekend and I've been out there now with my houseboat for ten years and I've never seen the moss so bad as what it has been. This past winter and spring I couldn't get my houseboat out

there without stopping and getting the moss out of around my motor and my motor clamps.

All right, I want to ask the biologists one question. Now, what has happened out there. Certainly it isn't the lake. The moss is back, laying flat on the bottom and is rotting. You can hang your hook into it and bring it up and the moss stinks. It's rotten. I want to ask Kenneth now what is causing the moss to die. My estimation is on account of so much water this year and muddy water and like we said before, very little sunlight during the rainy part just killed that moss. Not lowering the lake has killed it. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you sir. Gentleman back here by the camera.

MR. ROBIN McCaulley: My name is Robin McCaulley and I've been on Bistineau approximately 22 years. I was there before the moss and when the moss got started and all this drawdown bit and we had no moss on Bistineau until here about 15 years ago, 12 to 15 years ago when they lowered the lake in the pretense of repairing the gates. The contractor himself is a personal friend of mine and he had to put a culvert down in front of the gates to work on and he told people this before they drew the lake down and ever since then we've had a moss problem. In my opinion, that's when it got started.

Of course, I went to Bistineau as a private camp owner and as the lake grew I decided to get into the commercial camp business. I am now back working for a living like most people on Bistineau and there have been several camps, that at one time, large camps that have closed down in the last 5 or 6 years and if things go right next year or year after I don't know when I'll finish paying off my note that I made when I went in business. There is no question in my mind, I mean I've been there. I've lived there continuously for the last 22 years when they draw this lake down you can catch fish. In fact, they actually slaughter them in a sense because when a man goes out there he can catch a boatload but I think anybody with a reasonable amount of intelligence knows if you take two thirds of the water out of Bistineau you are going to draw those fish to a concentrated area that anybody can catch them with a dip net practically. As far as what the man is talking about today on down there this is something I don't know whether the biologists or Wild Life and Fisheries or who had anything to do with it, the gates that were put in down there at the dam, we're going to have salmon up here and that's what it would take to get in the fish landings that they built on Bistineau. I think that they themselves, I don't know of any of you people, but I have been to meetings where they admit that they have made mistakes and I think the lowering of Bistineau is one of the biggest they have ever made.

I have been to meetings the last 12 to 15 years on Bistineau and, in fact, this is the first one I have attended in several years because I gave up. We went to our senators and our representatives. Like I say, we can't do anything about it. Yet you people, I won't say you people, I mean back when I attended some of these other meetings, I'll let you people that will represent you down here and do something for you. You go to the people that you elect and they say our hands are tied. We can't do anything about it and this is the kind of stuff that I say I quit for about 6 or 7 years ago and this is the first meeting I have attended since. Thank you.

MR. PAT MADDEN: I'm Pat Madden and I live in Shreveport but I've had a camp on Bistineau for about 5 years and when I first started fishing down there, you could hardly see the lily pads. They were way out in the lake and now I can't even get out of the boat row. But, two weeks ago, two men came down and sprayed something on them and it's killing them and I want to know what it is because I want to get me some of it. (laughter) Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. In the back there. Don, you would like to say something.

MR. WILLE: I would just like to say one thing that we have proponents and we have opponents here of the

lake but just to give the Commission an idea of how many people we have against lowering of Lake Bistineau I wish that all that were against it would stand up.

MR. LUTTRELL: Seems to be a large amount.
I'd like to see the other side.

MR. WILLE: Let's see the other side.

FROM THE FLOOR: We're outnumbered men.

THE CHAIRMAN: All right. We have a gentleman here.

MR. WILLE: Excuse me. This is what we are primarily interested in today. I know that we are to discuss and I am going to make a motion to the Board very shortly. We want to hear everybody's side and views on this thing. I'm going to make a motion to the Board that we delay lowering of Lake Bistineau for 45 days. This is my...

THE CHAIRMAN: Let's... All right, go ahead.

MR. GERALD CAULFIELD: Mine will be very short. My name is Gerald Caulfield of Shreveport. I have no axes to grind. I'm not a property owner. I've just been using the lake and enjoying it for about 20 years, from one end to the other and for all purposes from water skiing to diving, bass fishing. I've enjoyed it and I've heard all sorts of arguments for lowering the lake. I think the first one I have ever heard was the vegetation around the edge of the lake grows better and

would be better for the ducks cause it would be more duck feed and now we have gone full circle and are ready to kill the moss by lowering it. I just wanted to represent the people who are not property owners, just simply users of the lake, asking you to think about us folks who just have a limited number of years on this earth. Don't deprive us the use of this wonderful lake.

THE CHAIRMAN: There is some adage about every day spent fishing is added to your life so I guess the best think you can do is just fish every day and you will be here from now on. Who would like to be next? I ask that we do try to speed this up a little bit. I see we are approaching the hour of twelve but I think we will just go right on through if you will bear with us and hear both sides and try to make some type of a decision.

MR. JIMMY SAUVIER: My name is Jimmy Sauvier. I live in Bossier City, Louisiana and own some property down on the lake. I acquired this about 5½ years ago in the hopes of probably building a home down there. Of course, they didn't have the drawdowns started then but I know one thing, I'm not a water skier and I'm not a pole fisherman but I'm a bass fisherman and a damn good one. I've got plenty of bass in Bistineau in years past. I started fishing in Bistineau in 1952, off and on until I retired from the Service. Now in the last few years since they started the drawdown in the lake, bass fishing has gotten rougher. It's a known fact that bass only live in 5%

of the lake. They don't live all over the lake but the area I'm talking about is just below Mrs. Madden's place. There are so many lily pads down there you can't move a boat. There is so much moss you can't even get out. I could start years ago at my place and go down 200 yards or maybe 300 yards. and have 8 or 10 bass of good size. Today, I can't even move my boat through that place for the lily pads.

All I'm saying is Lake Bistineau is a state lake. It belongs to the people. It belongs to us. We are the state and we feel that something ought to be done to take care of all of the people. I'm not saying the people that make a living off the lake, they should do that too, but we should take into consideration the people that have built homes down there, built camps for their children to enjoy the lake. But the way it is going now, we are not going to have anything left. And nobody can tell me, you can talk about a million fingerlings running here and there but if you are not catching the 3 or 4 lb. bass like you used to, there is something wrong in the lake and since they brought down the lake, there's more moss all over the place and you can't get in the areas that you need to fish.

Now you take people they spend two thousand dollars for a boat rig, \$200 for a tackle box, these people with their ski rigs, they can't go out in winter. A man puts out a lot

of investment when he starts to retire, he puts a couple or three thousand dollars in this stuff. He wants to enjoy it. Like the man said, we don't have much time on this earth so let's get with it. Take care of the lake and let the people enjoy what we've got. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Next. I don't see any other hands. All right. You've had a chance, we'll come back to you. If you have a rebuttal we'll save it until afterward.

MR. JERRY MARTIN: I'm Jerry Martin, President of the Aqua Cats Water Ski Club that ski on Lake Bistineau. I don't have very much to say for the skiers on the lake. We've enjoyed the lake for a long time. We ski down there about 10 years and, of course, conditions have gotten worse as has been mentioned. This year, we took the think in our own hands on our lot and we used Ortho Aqua Weed that we put in our area down there and it worked. It killed the moss. This is one treatment that we put in. The stuff is expensive though. It's about \$50 an acre is what it costs to use the stuff and it was effective and we were supposed to put out the second treatment of it and we didn't get the second treatment out because we heard that they were going to lower the lakes so we said, well, why spend our money because we knew the stuff was going to be back next year.

But my main concern is all the money that's spent developing lakes around the country, building the lakes. Have there been any studies into this area using chemical to kill the lake? Now this stuff we put out says on the label that it will not harm fish and I know right in our immediate area, people are still catching brim off our pier after we put the stuff out. There were also some ducks down there.

Some man had some wild ducks penned up, raising them in the same area that we put this stuff out int. It did not harm the ducks. We asked him if it hurt the ducks and it didn't hurt the ducks and the only thing that this stuff is, they say on the label, to not get it on your skin. You have to stay out of the lake for about 4 or 5 days after it is put out but it will kill it. We have seen the bottom for the first time. I don't know how many years it has been since we have seen the bottom in our area and we can see it now and people can get in and out of the boathouses. That is the answer for it. Now whether or not the money is available, I don't know about that. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think I can probably answer the question in generality. Most every chemical that I know of and I know that there has been lots of grants to L.S.U. and other colleges to work on a chemical problem to solve our grass

problem. There are many chemicals available today that do just as this gentleman spoke of. They do an excellent job. The fallacy of the whole thing is that no chemical company has to this date that I know of been able to come up with an economical chemical. That's the problem. There are many chemicals that would do it. That would be the ideal situation but from an economy standpoint they are impractical at this time and have been but there is tremendous amounts of work being done on this. Can you imagine the chemical company that does come up with an economical chemical that will kill these grasses. They are going to make millions. Did you want to rebuttal that? You can stay here. We have your name on record.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. I believe we had better get over to the opponents side. I think we have about run out of proponents, so if we have some opponents who would like to speak at this time. Yes sir.

MR. C. O. HOLLAND: Mr. Chairman, I want to tell you folks that I know exactly how Daniel felt when he found himself in a lion's den. I happen to have been a member of the Lake Bistineau State Game and Fish Commission when it was established back in 1932. I was a member of the Commission when the first section of the dam was built in 1934. It was not until 1941 that the first spillway was built on Lake Bistineau and the level of the water was raised four feet. In 1951 the

dam was rebuilt with a highway crossing it. A concrete spillway was built and the water level was raised again approximately 4 ft. Lake Bistineau today is 8 feet deeper than it was when it was first built in 1934. Mr. Dupuy I think if you will look at the record you will discover that the State of Louisiana did not acquire any land when Lake Bistineau was constructed.

The legislature authorized the Commission to take forage rights over the lands in the lake bottom. Those who conceded or granted forage rights over land were excused from having to pay any tax on that property even though they retained all of the mineral rights on the property. Lake Bistineau is a beautiful lake as has been stated here and it is not my purpose to make a long talk but I have been associated with the lake since 1934. I was there in New Orleans when Bob Maestri gave us the authority to let a contract or call for bids to build the first section of the dam. It was done in September of 1934. I have lived and fished on Lake Bistineau almost continuously since that time. The lake is different from many lakes in that there is an enormous part of the lake bottom or the lake where the water is very shallow. You can almost draw a line where Webster Parish touches Bienville on the east and Bossier on the west side of the lake. From that line north, there was some six or seven thousand acres of water land, or land flooded

by water. Now, there are some of my friends here this morning who say that the fluctuation of the water has not accomplished anything on Lake Bistineau.

I must disagree with them because I have seen what has happened out there. We have a growth on the water that we call duck weed. I don't know what the scientific name of the plant is but one thing that fluctuating the water has done and that was to eliminate the duck weed in the shallow part of the lake. It was not lowered this past year and we have more duck weed on Lake Bistineau today. I fished there yesterday. I at one time said I was the best bass fisherman on Lake Bistineau and I surrendered that title but not my interest in the sport.

Lake Bistineau is a beautiful lake but the shallow end of the lake is made almost absolutely useless by duck weed if not by the water vegetation underneath. I mean stuff that will grow in up to 10 feet of water and when we do not fluctuate the lake in the salt works area it is almost impossible for you to operate a motor and your fishing is very restricted. Fluctuating the water did eliminate the duck weed in the shallow sections of the lake. Now, we hear our people in the south end of the lake complaining about an ever increasing amount of moss. That's not the result of the fluctuating of the water. It is a natural encroachment that would come in time and the fluctuation of the water had nothing to do with that because the current carries the seed and the plant on down towards the dam and that's why you are getting more moss.

Now, we folks who have so much moss have not loaded our boats with moss and hold it down there. It got there by natural means. I know from personal experience and, you have too, one of the men referred to it here a minute ago. The growth of the moss is a ..I don't believe you can predict it. I don't believe you can explain it. There will be sections of the lake today that are so full of moss that you can't fish there. You can't run a motorboat. Next year that same identical spot may have very little moss in it and all of you have had that experience. Now the problem is this. We realize the majority of the people here, an overwhelming percentage of the people who are here, with a few exceptions, are primarily interested in the skiing on the lake. We have no objection to the skiers. That's what the lake is built for, for the use by the people.

Mr. Dupuy, while it comes to my mind, I think the Louisiana Supreme Court has held on numerous occasions that to own land on the lake bottom or to own land on the lake shore does not give the proprietor any proprietary rights to the lands under the water. The land belonged to the people when the lake was built and still belongs to those people. The lake, the state did not acquire any land whatsoever. It only asks for forage rights. It didn't get it from everybody. It just went ahead and built a dam anyhow. We, in Webster Parish, are the victims of living at the shallow end of the lake from Shreveport. On

south the water is deeper on average than it is from there north and it is the north section of the lake that is so badly infested with the water plants and we are the victims. Now, I am not.

Howard Davenport was the contractor that did the repair work and he said he might back down. I was sitting by him. He's the man that did the repair work on the dam, the gates in 1960. We had a five-year program and we have had in my judgement far better fishing. A lake that was much more navigable as a result of the fluctuation of the water instead of having it remain at a constant height. Now we have had an unusual year this year because we have had the heaviest winter rains than we have had in many a year.

Now then for that so called fish ladder that was built when Bob Kennon was Governor of the State of Louisiana. They spent \$12,000 building it. They could have had a bonfire in the middle of the water and did a lot more good with the money than what they did. As my friend, J. B. Williams, says the plans were drawn by a little engineer with long hair and a lot of mustache sitting on a high stool that never caught a fish in his life and that's about right because if the ladder is absolutely worthless and useless we need something there that will allow the fish to come up when the water overflows the spillway and we do not have it at the present time. We have some

fish in Bistineau this summer that came in with the high water last year and the fishing has been better for bass. Yesterday my friend and I went down there. We caught seven of them and they weighed about 12 pounds. That's a pretty good average per fish.

But the duck weed is beginning to take over the northern part of the lake. The norther third or six or eight thousand acres and Mr. Chairman, all we are here for, I'm a member of the Board of Directors of the Webster Wildlife and Sportsman's Club, Inc. The President is here. Mr. Patterson, will you stand up? Here he is, right over here. He's President of that Club. We're not here fighting or opposing. We are just asking the Commission to leave this matter in the hands of the men who spent their life in getting ready to know what to do with this kind of situation. They have studies this thing. They know what it is all about. You will be told later how much. I was told at a meeting the other evening about our club. We meet every month. The growth in the lake this year is 60% more than it was the year before the water was lowered. Now, that is a biologist's statement to us. All we are asking the Commission to do is to follow the recommendations of its trained, hired personnel who have no axes to grind. All they are trying to do is to make the lake most useful and usable for all of the people. Now that's their objective and all we are here for is to support their stand. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: One moment, sir. We need your

name, please sir.

MR. C. O. HOLLAND: Oh, yes, I forgot to tell you. I'm C. O. Holland and I live in a town that's a little closer to Heaven than any other place on earth. I live in Minden.

THE CHAIRMAN: Who will be next, please.
Yes, sir. I have one ahead of you.

MR. CECIL W. HUTTOW: I'm Cecil W. Huttow, President of the Caddo Wildlife Association. We have always been guided by the recommendations of the biologists and Commission staff, technicians and the Commission in following their own people who are trained in this work much more than we are and we support them now in their stand on the management of Lake Bistineau. Research and wildlife and fisheries management is an extended term of several years and in past some of these programs that they have instituted has been halted and delayed to such an extent that the end result has not been obtained. I would like to reiterate that the Caddo Wildlife Association supports the Commission and their biologists in their management of Lake Bistineau and support them throughout the entire program that they set forth to go even over the entire number of years that they recommend. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: The gentleman here on the right.

PROFESSOR McDONALD: My name is Professor McDonald and I'm from Minden too. That place close to Heaven but I've really caught hell over there the last ten or fifteen

years. I was the last Lake Commissioner, Chairman of the last Lake Commission that was in existence. I didn't want to take the job and I wanted to get out of it the day after I took it because it is a hot rock. But, there are some things. Patterson, you going to come up here next? Is Pat Patterson here? Good.

I had some good fellows on the Commission with me and we wanted advice what to do. Well, there is only one thing to do and that is to call on the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission and I'll tell you what. Even though we had a Lake Commission, the law stated that the Lake Commission was under the supervision of the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission. Now the parishes had a little job. They could and did nominate a commissioner but the commissioner had to be o.k.'d by the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission and they didn't have to take that man if they didn't want to. That's the law. So, we asked the lake commissioners to draw up some plans for the improvement of Lake Bistineau and I'd like to just ask a question. Who has the authority to do any improving on Lake Bistineau other than the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission.

That's an idea for you to think about and another little thing I want to tear up is about the gravel business. The gravel business and where Lake Bistineau begins. Lake Bistineau begins at the highway bridge on Old Highway 80 according to law and the law stated that the state gives by an act of the

legislature on July 30 when it was signed by the Governor all lands between the high water marks on either side of Lake Bistineau to the Lake Commission at that time. That includes the high water mark. Now most of you fellows have got places down on Bistineau that have been flooded, haven't you? The land belongs to the State of Louisiana. The drawback on that gravel business is the gravel is treated as a mineral and the state reserves the right to sell leases on the minerals under Lake Bistineau. We did have authority to regulate any machinery or drilling or pipelines that went across Lake Bistineau which is in the hands of the Wild Life and Fisheries now because the last law didn't do away with Act 42 or 64, it only abolished the Lake Commission and I'll tell you why that was.

I might have made a big mistake but the reason why we thought that was the best thing was because there was three parishes that wouldn't let the Commission do a dang thing. Everything they did on Bistineau was counteracted or not agreed to by one of the parishes and they had no more authority on Lake Bistineau than anybody else. They assumed the authority. That's hard to say but it is a fact. Now we had an agreement. We didn't have any agreement with Gifford Hill on the gravel business below the IC Railroad and the IC Railroad owns some land through there. It does not belong. The state gave that to them, see. There's no way in the world to keep them from digging gravel

except in the channel. We had an agreement with Braswell. We had agreement with Gifford Hill that they could dig within so many feet of the channel and that's all. They couldn't let the muddy water get in there. I'll admit that there has been some gravel dug on the east side over there right east of the salt works area and lot of that water goes into Bistineau muddy and should be stopped.

But, my idea was this when I wanted the Lake Commission abolished was to get Bistineau in the hands of who has the final say so before the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission and let them improve Bistineau if they could. Because as some man stated a short time ago if we don't do something with Bistineau in the next few years we are going to lose and I would like to say something to the lady who wondered what happened to the cedars or what's happening to the cypress on Bistineau. Cypress do not have very deep roots in the ground and the constant rolling of the water and the creation of bigger waves on the water washes those trees and some of them will turn over. That's a fact. You can laugh about that if you want to but it's the truth. I know every inch of Lake Bistineau almost. If you leave it to a popular vote, you'll never get anything done on Bistineau.

THE CHAIRMAN: Would you like to be next?

I won't ask you to restrict your comments because certainly the proponents will want the same. We are running past the lunch hour. We will stay here as long as you will but if you can speed it up, I think it would be of most interest to the group.

MR. J. E. PATTERSON: I'm J. E. Patterson, President of the Webster Wildlife and Sportsmen's Club. I came here at the request of an able Representative, Honorable Harmon Drew and the members of the Club. They all wish that I would convey to you that it is their desire to follow the recommendations of the Commission as it now stands to lower Bistineau starting immediately.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you sir. Who would like to be next? Do we have anyone else? The gentleman in the back.

MR. J. A. PENNINGER: Mr. Chairman, my name is J. A. Penninger and I live at 615 Rutherford Street in Shreveport. I'm part owner of a small tract of land on the east side of Lake Bistineau about a half mile north of the south boundary of Shreveport Pond and I'm here to say that personally my fishing is better in the spring and in the summer and in the winter because I believe that the drawdown is beneficial to the destroying of the underwater grasses, mosses and what have you on the lake. That is the primary reason that I am here. I would like to see the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission continue to drawdown the lake in the way that they see fit. One other thing that I would like to say in answer to the lady with the problem of the 20 feet median. I think that is only an establishment by the state when they measured the lake and the difference of the 20 feet is between the high point of the water and the low point of the water and the state has no claim on it other than the fact that they will

be able to maintain that 20 feet between the high level and the low level of the impoundment of the lake.

I am not an attorney but I believe that Mr Jeanerette who came up here before will realize that what I am going to say will be true, that there are very learned attorneys in Bossier, Webster and Lincoln Parish that believe that the lake itself is completely illegally impounded. It has no right of being there to begin with but neither that it's here, I'm glad it's here. The attorney may want to look into that fact as it comes to me from these people. Now, there is some point about the State of Louisiana owning any part of the lake. The only part of the lake that the state may possibly own would be a tract or two that had never been adjudicated out of the State of Louisiana by deeds or by conveyance of any sort that they have gotten from the Federal government by the Flood and Control Acts. That would possibly be the only tract that the State of Louisiana would have any jurisdiction over. The only other thing is the sand and gravel and I believe that everyone that knows anything concerning the mineral rights in the State of Louisiana, the sand and gravel is not considered to be a mineral as such. It is a surface complement and it is treated as a surface complement. I would like to go on record here as saying that I again favor the drawdown of the lake and its continuation. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Anyone else would like to speak? Another one behind the lights back here, yes.

MR. ARCHIE COLLINS: I'm Archie Collins and I'm on Lake Bistineau on the green part. I'd like to ask Mr. Holland one question. Mr. Holland, what business were you in before you retired, or are you retired?

MR. HOLLAND: I'm retired.

MR. COLLINS: What business were you in, sir?

MR. HOLLAND: Answer not audible.

MR. COLLINS; Well, we've been fighting each other for a pretty good while on this lake and I just wonder if the gravel people do business with the people back in Minden.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think we are going to have to draw the line here. Restrict your comments. I'll have to tell you all this. I'm a little bit against Archie right now in his comments but we did go out last night and had a wonderful meal at his establishment. It was absolutely out of this world, but it does not reflect on this Commission one iota so Archie, I'll have to ask you to restrict those comments.

MR. COLLINS; Well, what we are really interested in, I think we are all interested in Lake Bistineau. We have tried it for six years lowering it. We have tried it one year up. Now we are asking for a 45 day delay so I think we should give a little, take a little. If we give them six and they give us one, I think we ought to compromise on 45 days.

MR. MELVILLE MILLER: I'm Melville

Miller. I live right down the street, 2601 Old Minden Road, Bossier City. I'm not quite as old as Mr. Holland but I have been on the lake almost that long. We've been there since it was formed practically in 1936 not too far from this old fellow here. We knew when the fishing was good, back there when you didn't have any money. You didn't even have an outboard motor. We used to paddle out there. Of course, it wasn't too far to paddle to the channel then. We love Bistineau. We have fished in it, skied in it, swummed in it. It is the most beautiful lake I think in the whole world. We fished and boated and skied all over the country and I don't believe you'll come to one as pretty as that but the fish is gone out of Bistineau.

FROM THE FLOOR: It's gone.

MR. MILLER: Yes it is. We fished there for the last two years or three years. We do 75% of our fishing on Toledo. In fact, we bought a new boat, a bigger boat. It cost \$4,000 just so we could fish on Toledo. We've got a big investment on Bistineau. We've a retirement home, brick, air-conditioned. We've got \$30,000 out there, so we love it. We want to be there and I want to do anything in the world to help Bistineau. If lowering the lake will help it, I'm for it. But, it doesn't look like it has helped it much

but I do wish we would stop and put some fish in it. As Gray McGraw said Red River used to stock the lake a long time ago. Now the Red River hardly ever gets into it because it has been raised so much, but if the Wild Life could stock it and give us a little fish there, I'm willing to put up with the lowering of the lake or anything that will help it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Is there anyone else? Yes sir.

MR. ROBERT ADLEY: I'm Robert Adley. My family has a camp on Lake Bistineau. My company has a camp on Lake Bistineau. I represent the Bossier Jaycees as Executive Vice President to investigate the situation. I made a few notes when I was listening to everything that happened here. I'd like to ask Mr. Holland a question first of all. Mr. Holland?

THE CHAIRMAN: Let's not have questions and answers at this time. Let's just go ahead with your statement and we can come back to this.

MR. ROBERT ADLEY: All right fine. If the statement is true that no one knows where the moss comes from or why it comes and goes, what is the need for biologists. What is the need for your Commission. Second of all, we appreciate the expense that everyone, such as Mr. Holland, that has worked on this lake for some time but the problem is not what happened 30 years ago, the problem is what we've got now.

We are not concerned with what happened in 1934. We've got a problem that's here today. And if it is proving that chemicals will kill the moss but it is too costly for anyone to flip the bill so to speak, such as, the Commission but the Commission can consider another boat launching dock on the lake that would cost federal monies when I know there are many, many people in this place that have docks that are available at this time. I can't see any need whatsoever for another boat dock when we could use that money to kill the moss and take care of the lake. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Anyone else?

MR. BEN LEAVY: I'm Ben Leavy from Shreveport and in regard to stocking of the lake, the biologists tell me that a single bass can lay 50,000 eggs. Just think what a married one can do.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do we have anyone else?

All right. Suppose at this time we have a letter that needs to be read into the minutes of this meeting. I'll ask Mr. Angelle if he will read it.

MR. ANGELLE: I was handed this letter this morning. It's written by State Representative Harmon Drew and he apologizes for not being here today because of his duty as a Constitutional Convention delegate. His duty carried him to Baton Rouge. This letter addressed to me says,

"Pursuant to our telephone conversation last week, I wish to state my position before the Commission

relative to the proposed drawdown on Lake Bistineau. The Webster Parish sportsmen have in the past and do now again reiterate their confidence in the Department of Wild Life and Fisheries to use their expertise and knowledge in determining procedures to be followed to improve Lake Bistineau. We could understand the purpose of not drawing down the Lake last year but due to the increase in vegetation, we see no alternative but to return to the annual drawdown. This procedure has helped the lake and will continue to do so. It will further facilitate stump removal and other improvements to the lake. Apparently, the opponents to the immediate drawdown have not taken into consideration the fact that the biological information requires that the drawdown begin immediately to produce the desired effect and a 45-day delay would render such action useless. The Commission's decision to immediately start the drawdown is a correct decision based on the above mentioned biological expertise and I sincerely urge the Commission to stand by its decision so we may make Lake Bistineau the type sport facility it should be. With best personal regards, I remain, Very truly yours, the Honorable R. Harmon Drew."

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. We'll take just a moment now to change the tape. All of this is being

recorded and we are just about out, so we'll change it now. Are you about ready? O. K. If there are no other persons that would like to speak at this particular time, I'm going to ask Mr. Kenneth Smith, Chief of the Fish Division, to come up to the microphone or whichever approach you wish to choose to take. Kenneth, I believe you have some slides. Which would you like to have first. All right. Will you come to the mike please. Burton, we are going to have to move a little bit here. Are you going to use this now, Kenneth?

MR. KENNETH SMITH: Right shortly.

We can go through the slides, Mr. Chairman, and then we can go into questions that were asked during the discussion here earlier if you would like to do it like that. I'll go ahead with the slides.

THE CHAIRMAN: O. K.

MR. SMITH: My name is Kenneth Smith. I'm Chief of the Fish Division. I was Assistant Chief of the Fish and Game Division for 9 years when it was one division. Prior to that I was statewide Project Leader for 4 years. Prior to that I was District Supervisor for 4 years. Prior to that I was, well, I was a working type biologist and did a little bit of everything but I've been with the Commission since January, 1949. As I said, I did work with the Fish and Game Division for 9 years and we worked with and supervised and developed fishery programs as well as game

programs and that basically is my background.

I have some slides here, as I mentioned, for the benefit of the people here. As Mr. Dupuy has stated, I did recommend to the Commission on August 16 that Lake Bistineau be drawn down and I would like to go over these reasons again for the benefit of the people here. I have brought some slides so we can show a little bit better what we are talking about here because I think there are some points that haven't been brought out that we should sort of get out in the open. Beat around a little bit here, so if we can, let's go ahead and have the slide projector on, Louie.

Now, we know that no method known to anyone these days will get rid of all of the vegetation in all of these lakes. They have undergone a succession of vegetation that is just as sure to come as daylight follows dark. We don't want to get rid of all the vegetation because this actually helps your fisheries in some of the lakes but when it gets so excessive and so dense that you can't fish and you can't motor, you can't even move then there has to be something done. Drawdowns are the only practical means we can at least control in part some of the problems that occur with vegetation in these lakes and these vegetation problems are beginning to be paramount.

Of course, we are interested in fishing and we try to tie our fisheries consideration in with vegetation control but if you can't fish and can't get a hook in the water, then it doesn't make any difference how many fish you have. Now, this is an extreme situation of aquatic weed infestation. You've got a little bit of everything there. You've got duck weed and you've got alligator weed and you've got several different types of plants underneath the water and it is just a dense mass of vegetation which is completely useless to anyone.

So, this is the situation that has prompted these recommendations for drawdowns as we have prepared them. All lakes are not alike, they are basically alike, but somehow they each have peculiar problems. Some you can't even draw down, you only aggravate the problem with drawdowns. We feel that with drawdowns, if you can at least partially control this. This situation here is better than the condition you saw in the earlier slide. This is what we call light to medium infestation. We would prefer to not have it but we are just trying to live with these lakes out here. Now, in order to, well, I thought I would give an idea that there are different types of vegetation and these different species of vegetation react differently to different water conditions. This is egarian. Now, that's

the only name I know except moss. We've got to distinguish because in trying to identify species and what might happen under certain conditions, we learn a little more about this stuff all the time. This is your primary problem plant out there now, particularly in shallow water areas. It occurred over all of your infested areas.

Prior to the drawdown conditions we had a number of species of plants, coontail and a little bit of everything, but this has been the real problem plant in Lake Bistineau. We have to manage sort of primarily for it. I'll give you a little better look at this plant up close. This is the plant and the flower. This is the problem plant in the shallow water areas in the 0 to 4 ft. level in Lake Bistineau now. It reacts readily to drawdown conditions and this is why this vegetation came back. We did not draw it down last year for reasons I will get into later. This is the one that has come in and given us the problem in shallow water areas. To give you a better look this stuff begins to flower in about March, April May back in there. And if you are motoring through some of these stands you'll see these little white flowers out here. This is the plant that you are looking at here.

Now, this is milfoil that has occurred in some of the areas. It tolerates drawdowns. It has come in

areas with the drawdowns and this is a plant that has decreased over this past year and its reaction to the high waters as has been mentioned earlier, this is true that the extra waters in Lake Bistineau, estuaries, etc., has caused stresses on this particular plant and it can't stand deep water very long. It can grow back and forth with drawdowns but this is one of the reasons that this plant is not in areas it was earlier. This plant has dropped down. We have gone down with scuba gear and found that these seedlings occur in most of the areas where you have a decrease in this milfold vegetation. This fine leaf stuff we saw before here.

Now, this is combamba or fan wart if that makes it easier to remember. It is more tolerant to deeper water and this plant will replace the milfold if the water is maintained at a constant level. To give you a little bit better look at the plant, that's what you see when you reach down there and grab big bunches of it. It's a real problem plant. Probably, our number two plant in Lake Bistineau that we really have to fight and try to remedy with the drawdowns.

In order to get some quantitative idea of what is happening with vegetation, we realize we can't go out there, we'll ride out there and the weather looks kinda bad today, and the next year it's kinda bad this year, a little bit worse, etc. We've got to have some kind of quantitative measure

on this vegetation. In order to do this, aquatic people have developed these transects. They start at the back and as the water increases by difference of one foot interval they take their samples and I'll show you their sampling gear in just a minute. They drip dry this material. It's chopped down through this square water column for one minute and weighed and they will move out until the water gets another foot deeper and take another sample. By this technique which is used by the people at Northwestern they have helped us develop this. Dr. Dennis Sanders up there has worked with us on this. Then, we are beginning to get a method of comparing quantitatively the amount of vegetation or the changing in the amounts of vegetation from one year to the other so these are transects. They don't go over across the lake. We go out until the vegetation stops and that's the end of it. We can't put these things every quarter of a mile because logistics get impossible after a while and you are getting more change seasonally than you are getting in area or site changes.

So, this is the approach we are using now and while I have the map, I will comment. Of course, we have been talking about the shallow water that most of you know the upper end to the left is the shallow area where we have had so much problem. The middle and lower end of the lake has not been a problem. It has not had the situation that has been nearly as bad as we have had in the upper end. Now we have estimated, I was talking to some

of the boys this morning, that prior to the drawdown there was probably up to about 6½ to 7 thousand acres of this lake that was severely infested. Since the drawdown has begun we believe we have halved the amount of severely infested lake.

Now, we need this technique to determine the difference from one year to the other and we will probably continue this unless we can come up with something better to give us some sort of comparison but I just thought I would let you see what we are trying here.

Now, this is the apparatus. It's a cumbersome, sort of unwieldy thing but it works. What this is all about the rig you see hanging off the boom at right is a square knife. It's 2 feet square and sharpened on all four edges on the bottom. It has a bag on top which catches the vegetation and the fellow up there at the winch just cuts it loose as he pulls the plug and down she goes and falls freely in the water. It cuts a square column of vegetation as it goes down. The bag on top prevents the vegetation from escaping up through the top of the cutter. Now, that thing goes straight to the bottom.

This is another shot of it just before he cuts it loose. You see the little slot on your side. This is where the cutter goes in and this is a fellow who is sliding this in. As the cutter gets to the bottom, then he takes his scuba gear if it's deep water. If it's shallow water, he just reaches down and pushes it in. This slices the vegetation off the bottom. The perforated

material in the center allows the material to drip after he raises it to the top of the water and then he can swing it over in the boat. This is just another shot of the bag that keeps it from escaping. Then the bag is simply removed and the vegetation, just reach it and scoop it out and weigh it. Now, this is scuba gear we use to go down. As the bag is dropped it falls freely. He just cuts it loose from everything, he can't let it just turn the crank up, the pulley loose up there because it doesn't fall properly. He takes a rope down there and hooks it to it back up again. We were concerned about this shallow water situation and this is the chart we had run off here to the change in vegetation in the shallow water. That is a different transect. It really doesn't mean a whole lot but there had been an increase in weight of this material. We are working on species from this now but the total weight when you go out there fishing, you get something on your hook. It doesn't make any difference what it is, it's still a pain in the neck. This is the change that we had noted with this particular technique and want to use methods that are factual, that they are true, because if we don't help to get to the factual bottom of this thing, then we are not actually helping solve the problems but this is what we had turned up.

We did actually find in these shallow waters areas that there a 60 percent increase in vegetation. Seventy-three over 72. Now I don't have my charts on the deep water. There

was a decrease in some of these deep water areas. As we know there is a decrease in this milford probably caused by the stresses placed on this material with the added water we had for probably over a month. There was 3 to 4 feet over normal spillway level in the lake this spring here.

Now, the dark green vegetation at the bottom of the slide are water hyacinths. When we pull the water out, the hyacinths are on dry ground, the root systems are not adequate to root itself, say, like alligator weed. The water hyacinth dies and of course, if you get a little freeze on it, that helps to kill it too. Lot of time this stuff gets back in the shallow areas where your hyacinth workers cannot take their boats back in there and this kind of constant source of infestation always coming out and will get established and create new problems every time she breaks loose so it does give us a measure of control with water hyacinths. I think we've got the water hyacinths fairly well under control on Lake Bistineau. They got to be pretty much of a problem last year.

This is an area that during drawdown and the lake is coming on down you don't want to stop at this point because you have not done much good if you just come up there and stop at this point. This is just a picture that we thought we would show you with the lake coming down. Ideally, you would want to draw the bottom where this material, this is the layer that he is peeling

back and we found that drying definitely does help retard the growth of this material. It also helps if you can get it dry and when you get the cold weather, the cold weather is more effective with a drier condition because the cold simply penetrates deeper in the soil if it is dry. If it is wet you just get a thin film on top and that's it. You don't get any deep benefit from it unless you do dry it. So, this is what we had hoped to accomplish with a draw-down during the dry parts of the year.

Here is just a -- this is not.

Bistineau but it illustrates what we would like to accomplish with a drawdown. It exposes the bottom to drying conditions. It lets or causes a small forage fish, or shad, brim, etc., to have to go out into deeper water where your predators can reduce the numbers because we found in fish populations where the great majority of fish, weight-wise, in Bistineau were shad. They were large gizzard shad that couldn't be utilized by anything and we have effectively reduced the number of shad in the lake but this does allow the predators to work your forage species over a lot better. Additionally, you have a lot of vegetative material on the bottom which contains nutritive material that is not available unless you dry it. It becomes soluble when you expose it to the air and this is sort of extra fertile effect in the water when you raise it. This accumulates over a number of years and normally you don't get enough build-up in one year to cause any great difference.

This is another point I am going to in just a minute but in order to find out what is happening with our fish population, we like to keep up with these things to get some idea of the aquatic vegetation. This is simply a block net these boys are putting out here. They will take a location over the lake. Put out this acre-size net and it goes all the way to the bottom. This is the other crew working in a lake and they will pump rotenone. This is the material that will kill the fish in the lake. We have to kill them so we can see them and count them, because you just can't look in water and know what's there so the first day a lot of these fish come up to the top of the water and we recover them then. Incidentally, these fish are still good to eat. This is a material that is used widely in stock ponds and what have you. There is no damage and no danger from the stock drinking the water or anything else.

So, then the second day a number of fish have sunk and then they float on top of the water and we also weigh and measure and count those. So this is the method we use in getting our fish population data. These are simply dead fish that have come up to the top of the water. It is always fun the first day. Everybody is hooping and having a good time catching the good live fish out there. Next day when they come up all swelled up and bloated and stinking then it gets to be a little bit work. That's what it turns out to be. We bring those fish in.

We sort them as to species and tabulate this information on our field data form. This is for the sorting board and that's a measuring board you see on lower right of your screen there. This gives us an idea of the species, the size we class them by, fingerlings, intermediates and available species. This is information we had run off here--total pounds of non-game fish per acre. That is your shad, gar, drum and all other species besides game fish. You will notice in 1966 this was prior to the drawdown, you had 213 lbs. of fish - 205 lbs. of that was shad.

Now, as we have reduced the number of non-game fish then we have made a favorable balance of total catchable size of game fish. Now what happened here in 1966 our rotenone samples indicated a poundage of around 54 lbs. of game fish per acre. Now, you get the stimulated effect and it jumped up to 125 lbs. in 1967. It hung in for a year and then for all purposes it leveled off to approximately the same level prior to drawdown. This has not damaged the fish population but it did not remain high because they had used this nutritive substance in the water which was caused by the initial stimulation caused from drawdown. Of course, this material does not remain available all the time. You use it up and the fish will back off. This is the reason we have recommended to the Commission last year that the lake not be drawn down. What we had hoped to do, if we could live

with the vegetation was to try to close it down even a couple or three years, if the vegetation didn't get too bad. Then we could lower it again and get the high population jump. This is simply a means to manage water bodies to produce better fishing.

Well, the water was stabilized this year but the recurrence of the vegetation in the shallow water areas has been such a problem that from a fish management standpoint, we had better forego that and see what we can do just by getting boats around the lake out here. Now, this is, I believe, winds up my slide presentation. I just had a few, I thought I would show you this and try to bring officially these ideas to you that we have discussed among ourselves for some time and why we would recommend it to the Commission.

Mr. Chairman, if you would like, I can go down over these points that these people have asked as we have gone through the discussions here. O. K.

The question on chemical treatment has been partially answered, I think, in that it's obvious that chemicals at the cost of about \$50 an acre. This is about what it costs on Bistineau. It would get prohibitive after a while and I guarantee that if we scraped up all the money we had and treated Bistineau, we would be treating every other lake in the State of Louisiana and we would be wiped out before we got to the third or fourth one somewhere. So there is just no practical way that you can mass treat these water bodies with chemicals.

Now, the lady, I believe it was Mrs. Madden asked if there was some material that she might be able to spray at least around her boat dock or somewhere and I couldn't say "yes, there is a material that you do anything you want to" because different plants react differently to different chemicals but what I will suggest is that we can find out where you live and check the particular type vegetation at your locations and I'm sure we can recommend a type chemical which you could buy. Of course, whenever you pay \$30 a gallon for this stuff, then it is high but maybe you could get most of a season's benefit out of it. So, we know some of this vegetation is going to occur so we think it is a practical thing. Some people want to buy it and we will be glad to tell you what will work on what particular type of vegetation you have.

Now, touching on the grass carp just a minute. We think the grass carp does have potential in the State of Louisiana and we certainly hope that thing works out but we are a little bit cautious because these things are pretty easy to let loose but you can't go out and pick them all up once they have turned sour on you. At this time, Arkansas is the only state that has seen fit to release these fish. They released them, of course, in the reservoirs and they have not had the problems. We have found our river systems have adequate conditions for spawning of these fish. There is no reason why they can't successfully spawn

if they occur in these rivers or if enough of them are released in the rivers to create the proper spawning conditons so what we are saying is "let's look at the fish and let's personally work with hybrid fish if we can and then we can have our hybrid or sterile fish and the people at Stuttgart, Arkansas, are just about to break through on this thing.

Went on up there to talk with them last year and at the time all they had was hybrid which was grass carp-Isr rather carp combination but these are brand new fish and we have to start with him. We have some now up at Northwestern, some at L.S.U., some at Nicholls University, where the people are trying to work to see what type of benefits and advantages they may have. So, we think the use is good but there are problems that have not been worked out with this fish yet. We don't know what happens, say now you can put certain numbers of fish in there and as long as these same numbers stay, well, that's O.K. If you do get reproduction and if you do begin to get competition from other native species, then you are in trouble and there is nothing you can do about it. You have just had it. Let's live with them and do what we can with the vegetation for a few years until we can find out what this thing does. I hope he works. I think he has a pretty good chance but let us look at him and not let him get us all in trouble. This is what we are saying with the grass carp here now. So, we certainly haven't disregarded him and we do appreciate

the possibilities this thing may have.

On the cypress trees, I don't know what is causing the trees to die. If it is a problem, it hasn't been brought to my attention. We can certainly check and see with some of the people who are more knowledgeable in the forestry business than we are as to what might be causing this. There was a question brought up about what happens to the brim that are carrying eggs right now. Brim spawn the year round and their spawn is 3 inches long. Actually, the trouble has not been to get adequate brim spawn. The trouble has been sometimes that there are just too many brim out here. So, the fact that there are brim carrying eggs now is really no cause for concern because their major spawning period is during the spring but they will spawn about just any time of the year. I wouldn't be too concerned because these things are very prolific. One brim will lay five to ten thousand eggs, so you can fill up the old brim bucket pretty quick out there with just a few fish.

I have written this note down about what caused the vegetation to die in some of these deeper areas. I think we have covered that. Probably it was the stress placed on material as the high water came in here.

When we spray in the lake, we spray water hyacinths and we use 4 lbs. of 24-D per acre. If there has been an effect, it may have been that some of this material begins to react with the particular season now and some of it may be

beginning to decrease as it would normally do but I doubt if we have much effect on it with the 24-D chemical that we sprayed out here. If it were that easy we would go out here and knock it out tomorrow. Now we have taken the gentlemen who had a comment that bass were not all over the lake. We take our samples in representative areas and we had I think 45 lbs. of game fish per acre in 1973. It went along from around 50 or 55 lbs. and it averaged out somewhere around 50 lbs. of game fish per acre. Now this is a good poundage for impoundments. If we can keep it between 25 and 50, this seems to be fairly good. You are not going to maintain anything higher than that in reservoir impoundment in Louisiana. You get much higher in backwater areas but you just can't make it in reservoirs.

Now, as far as stocking the lake. I don't know if fish were placed in the lake at some earlier date. They may very well have been but you see all we could give you would be fingerlings--little tiny fish and as long as you get anywhere near adequate reproduction with your native species out here then you wouldn't be able to notice what we put in there with almost our total production from our hatcheries with the size lake we have here and we could not bring you large catchable size fish. We would be hauling hundreds of pounds of water for just a few fish. Natural reproduction will take care of all of the fish that you could possibly add to the population in the lake out here. If a lake ever does get in trouble, say, if a drawdown, if it's drawn

down to do some work and there is a big die-off then, of course, we could do all we can to begin to put fish back in here but, at this time I don't think we could help you with our production of fish in our hatcheries.

Someone suggested that we use boat dock money to control aquatic vegetation. Well, you couldn't control a lot and, too, I can say, once you begin when you run out of money, \$10,000 or \$20,000, you wouldn't get around to everybody, and, of course, wherever you stop the next guy down the road will take your head off because you didn't get to him. There is not enough money, you couldn't effectively control aquatic vegetation with this amount of money. It gets much higher than that.

That, I believe, Mr. Chairman was most of the questions I had. There may be some questions from the floor on some of this discussion but that concludes my remarks.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you Kenneth. That was most learned and interesting comments. I think we all gained something from it. A young lady here has a question.

FROM THE FLOOR: (Inaudible)

MR. SMITH: Lady, I'm not enjoying this myself. Yes mam. Our intention is to try to monitor and try to keep ourselves as well up-to-date with conditions in the lake as we possibly can and we realize and, of course, this Commission,

well, they know their spot on this thing here. It does make it difficult to try to referee these disagreements but we realize the inconvenience for the people with camps out here and we feel that every time we come up with one of these recommendations, we haven't forgotten this. There is a terrific problem out here with your aquatics and I wish we could find a better --we are going to be looking for a better solution. I'm not sure at this time what we'll do. We will look. It's possible that a drawdown would be the only thing that could effectively reduce the vegetation. We want to look and I couldn't say now what we will do next year. We will be bringing the matter up; we will discuss it with the Commission and everyone that would like to comment, we will be happy to have them here.

MR. SMITH: Well, you see, lakes change. There is nothing constant about a lake at all times. That's why we are trying to get all this goofy looking equipment we have out here to try to find out what is taking place out here. We spend many man-days out here each year with our roteone sampling and with the vegetative sampling. We are actually trying to get factual information so we won't have to guess. If we can't provide you that service, like the man said, you don't need any.

FROM THE FLOOR: (Inaudible)

MR. SMITH: We will sincerely examine every possibility that is open to us and hope that we can recommend

to the Commission what will be compatible with everyone here.

Yes mam.

THE CHAIRMAN: May I comment a little bit there. I think what Kenneth is trying to tell you is this is invariable and there is no set procedure or no set conditions on the lake and it has to vary from year to year. I think what he is saying, what he recommends to the Board, you have at least a month to know about this, but I would like to state this to you.

I don't know which is right and which is wrong, but I will state this and I know this to be an iron clad fact that our biologists are doing everything in their ability to manage this lake to the betterment of the lake. Now, certainly, they are going to make mistakes, just like you make mistakes and I do.

I know fishermen and I'm one and I constantly cast in the wrong place. I know that's a mistake but he's going to make some mistakes but his heart is there. He's trying, he's an educated man, he and his group, and this is their vocation and they are really trying to do a job for you. A lot of pressure is on them and I know we have differences of opinion. I personally have differences of opinions, with not Kenneth with his biological standpoint, but from a majority standpoint. So, I did want to point this out to you. Kenneth, I know you are doing a wonderful job. Any other questions?

FROM THE FLOOR: Two questions. In lowering the Lake Bistineau, is it possible that lowering the lake and leaving it down for one year or two years, just taking it out of commission would be a better approach than taking it out of commission for 3 or 4 months. Number two, if you are going to lower the lake and impound the fish in a small area, would it follow that you should eliminate all fishing and hunting on that lake while it's down. I mean your commercial netting and so forth on Lake Bistineau, it's going to take a disproportionate amount out of the lake while it is down.

MR. SMITH: Well, sir, let me--I'll repeat your questions in the order that you asked them. You asked first if we had considered lowering the lake over a twelve months period and then maybe give it a good treatment and then not have to go through this each year.

If you lower it, of course, you lose your fish and we like to hold enough water in the lake to retain your fish population. We don't want the fish killed because this is a valuable resource, you know, the fish in there.

On your other question as to why don't we restrict fishing during draw-down periods. Of course, it's brought out that a lot of fish are caught and this seems to be not good because they catch them but we come back the next year and to the best of our ability we find that we have the same relative fish

population each year. We think you would lose more recreation not fishing it. I mean if you didn't fish the lake during drawdown you would lose more recreation than you would gain, you see. Otherwise, we think it is a resource there...it's a good time to catch them. The fish reproduce in our waters very rapidly and they grow rapidly, so we think it would really be better to go ahead and fish them and enjoy them, take them on home and put them in the deep freezer and come on back here next year.

Let me go back over that one more time. My friend, Bill over there said he didn't follow that sort of business. Now, Bill, what I said as far as not fishing, you know, during the drawdown period is that you are not solving anything if you don't fish. If you catch the fish, you've caught them and you go ahead and enjoy the fish, you see, and then the next year they spawn and take off again. We found our fish populations stay pretty much the same. We see no reason anywhere in Louisiana to place a closed season on fishing. You would just be losing too much. If the fishing is good, have at it. Yes sir.

FROM THE FLOOR: (Inaudible)

MR. SMITH: This was in the 0 to 4 ft. areas and, of course, we only measured 72 to 73 because we have only been using this technique. We have only known about it for a couple of years. We did have some slides. I don't have them here, but we did have a decreased vegetation in some of the deeper areas but

we are concerned in the drawdown zone here. That's the reason we had presented this as we found it here with the low water areas.

FROM THE FLOOR: (Inaudible)

MR. SMITH: Well, it's evidence that that convinces us that stable water in Lake Bistineau, you know, create vegetation problems and indicates that probably if you leave it stable. You are returning to the original condition of the lake where this vegetation intrudes on out into the - it invades other deeper areas. We found this ageria to be in pretty deep water and combaba particularly out in 12 feet. Now once you get to about $7\frac{1}{2}$ maybe 8 feet depth, it breaks off. You have some vegetation out in the 10 to 12 feet but it's very scarce. It's really not a problem. It's there, but not a problem. You do have it up to the 7 feet depths. It's information, you know. I guess you might call it negative but it is information that if you stabilize it then you are returning to your vegetative problems here.

FROM THE FLOOR: From year to year-- what I'm wondering do you have --all these drawdowns all these years.

MR. SMITH: At one time we had some photographs that were taken at various stages and we had the court case here two or three years ago and all the judge has all those. We don't have the real information that we would like to have and this is the best we have come up with. This is a vegetative sample. We just don't have it but there were visual observations and that's what I call it right here now, that there was an improvement in

these shallow water areas. We don't really think that's good enough. That's why we are trying to get back to a more positive approach on this thing so we can give you one or two or three figures so that's the way we have said it. Yes sir.

One point we haven't mentioned is that we did check the acreage on this. As I mentioned earlier, there was an infestation over 7,000 acres. Now this may be a point you may want to argue but this is the best we could determine. We think we have reduced this by half. I think we have cut that down to about 3,000 acres now. Yes, sir. Well, I know, but this is the best we could tell on it.

Mr. Chairman, I'm going to let you pick the speaker there.

THE CHAIRMAN: All right.

FROM THE FLOOR: (Inaudible)

MR. SMITH: We've had drawdowns on a number of lakes. One we have had in on - Bundicks. Was about the only think we could use on Bundicks. We have had it on Anacoco Lake. We have had it on Iatt Lake. Never did have a real good one on Iatt Lake. It was always sort of a half dose situation and it really never did anything but just get aggravated over there, I believe. We have about 15 or 20 lakes that this drawdown has been utilized. Sometimes you can't draw these things down certain times of the year because you have intrusions of buttonwillow and

that sort of thing. We are finding that as look at this, the only way we can learn sometimes and all these lakes don't react the same. We will recommend or initiate the best method we possibly know and then if that doesn't work, then we will come up with another best thing we can come up with. There is no just black and white exact precise line in this business. I wish there were, but there simply just isn't. Yes sir.

FROM THE FLOOR: (Inaudible)

MR. SMITH: Mr. McDonald, I believe, whenever he was Chairman of the Commission, I believe drew it down for about three years. Isn't that right Mr. McDonald? The Commission drew it down for two years, three years. It was a six year drawdown.

THE CHAIRMAN: One thing you want to bear in mind in most of these lakes that we have these drawdowns on are governed by Commission and this is the only lake, Bistineau is the only lake that has been put in the sole authority of the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission and only a couple or three years ago. The rest of them are governed by Commission. For instance, when he mentioned Iatt Lake. They wouldn't let them draw it down to the specific level that they wished and they got a half-way measure and consequently they got no good and no bad either. They just did a half-way job.

MR. SMITH: Well, the drawdowns were initiated by Mr. McDonald and then they appeared to be effective in controlling vegetation, so whenever the Commission, of course,

was given the responsibility to manage the lake, we continued the same thing that we had recommended to his group to go ahead and draw it down.

FROM THE FLOOR: (Inaudible)

MR. SMITH: Well, sir, I don't know that you would call it experiments. The question was since we've drawn this thing down. Let me see. What was your question again. O. K. 45 days. What effect would 45 days have on the effects of the drawdown. What we would run into here with the delay that you can only take about, well, it takes you about at best 21 days to draw it down. You can only get 4 inches a day out of it and what you run into is the probability that you'll have some wet weather. You see if you delay it 45 days, say, well about the 1st of September and then you go in the middle of October. If you draw it down, you see, you get closer to the middle of November before the lake gets down and then you are getting in your rainy season and the chances are the odds are against any sort of a dry condition.

In fact, the lake may not even empty, you see, because you have this big Dorcheat watershed. Probably wouldn't let it empty. During October, your rainfall is about 2 inches or better and your evaporation is about twice that. Then as you get into your cooler weather months, then your rainfall exceeds the evaporation so you begin to fill up your system in there. So this is a problem you are running into and here again you can't say

exactly because you don't know what the weather is going to be.

FROM THE FLOOR: That's the reason I say you can't tell what the weather is going to be next January whether we are going to get water back in the lake in February--- rainfall all of the year, what we are going to expect for rains. We may not get these rains.

MR. SMITH: We checked the rainfall records and we have some here. We are just trying to play the odds on this, you see, and it indicates that on an average year this will happen. This is about all you can do because you don't know.

FROM THE FLOOR: (Inaudible)

MR. SMITH: The first year we drew it down we got a pretty spectacular production of bass fingerlings. I recall that from the data. Drawdowns do provide ideal spawning sites. I won't say its absolutely necessary for fish to spawn but it's not detrimental to fish spawning.

FROM THE FLOOR: Is ther any other lake in the state that you draw down six straight years?

MR. SMITH: No sir.

FROM THE FLOOR: I wonder if this has showed him that Bistineau has not been successful and we would not have to continue drawing it down. Why is this? We have less moss right now in the part of the lake that I use. After this last

winter we had, we had so much rain and all that and consistently cool weather, not hard freezing weather. Why not give us another year with the lake up and let's see what happens then. (Clapping.)

MR. SMITH: Well, to partially answer that, this is not a permanent cure. An annual drawdown. There is no permanent thing about it at all. Just leads to another drawdown. But, as far as any other treatments or anything like that I think that one year we will almost have to determine what you are going to do for the next year here, but it's not a permanent treatment we are after here.

FROM THE FLOOR: But last year we didn't draw it down and we got less moss. Wasn't as bad in the spring and now it's gone away.

MR. SMITH: We know that some areas that it is less than last year. This is where you are. As we said, it was probably effected by high water but there are definite areas which have less vegetation than the year before. But sitting under this area where the vegetation has disappeared if you will get you something and go down to the bottom of the lake, you will find these seedlings, these sprouts. This is what we found down there that will appear within probably a year if the lake is maintained because it tolerates the higher water levels here. This has been one of the real problem plants in the lake is that fanwort out there. So I suspect this will occur next year, if you don't draw it down.

FROM THE FLOOR: I can't sample like you do, but I can observe and my observation is that after six

straight years of drawdown the moss is worse than it has ever been and this year with the lake being left up and haven't had -- the moss is in a better condition than I've seen since before we first drew it down.

MR. SMITH: Well, for where you are you are probably right there. But in areas of shallow water we feel pretty sure that we have information that indicates that it is worse in the shallow areas and --

FROM THE FLOOR: If it is worse, what good has the drawdown done?

MR. SMITH: Well you see, we didn't draw it down this past year. There was a partial control in the shallow areas and you'll never get rid of all of it, even the shallow areas here and this covers the area which completely eliminates fishing in the shallow areas and this is where we are aiming at, not the deep areas because tradition is that this has not been a real problem. I know in some areas it has, but in most of the lake they don't have that problem -- in the shallow areas only.

FROM THE FLOOR: (Inaudible)

MR. SMITH: Well, one thing is invasion of woody plants like buttonwillow will come in and it will grow over your lake and when you reflood it, then all you've got is bushes out there. This happened on Anacoco.

In addition, you will have hyacinth seeds germinate. Normally, hyacinths reproduce by rison, they just put

a little shoot out the side and other ones grow up. If you draw the lake down in the summer, then these plants germinate and there are millions and millions of these seeds that are produced annually. You will get so many of those things you can't even see the water, so summer drawdown is pretty dangerous. You are losing ground with those with your vegetation.

THE CHAIRMAN: If I might explain that those seeds will germinate after 25 or 30 years. If they have been there say today 25 to 30 years from now they could germinate with the proper conditions. Hyacinths.

MR. SMITH: They have been accumulating all this time down there so if you want, you create the right conditions and these things will grow and look out there, the world is full of hyacinths out there.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any more questions?
One here.

FROM THE FLOOR: (Inaudible)

THE CHAIRMAN: Lady over here.

MR. SMITH: If you have sufficient muddy water. I don't know where you would get it since you have cut the Red River off. You know back water areas that get flood waters annually don't have an aquatic problem but turbidity does reduce the growth of this material. Where you get the muddy water would be something else. I think people don't like to fish in muddy water either, you know, they like to fish in nice clear water.

FROM THE FLOOR: (Inaudible)

MR. SMITH: Well, this has been looked at but since the Red River has been cut off, you just don't get water back and over except under extreme conditions like this year. Well, you know, the dam, when they built the dam, and the river can't get back into the lake like it used to and, of course, this is why most of your impoundments were built at one time, the rivers back into it and you had this backwater fishery that was tremendous and, of course, people wanted to enjoy it the year round but it doesn't maintain its high productivity because in a backwater area it completes draws down each year, you see, it refloods each year and then this produces a tremendous pond of crayfish which produced lots of pounds of fish and your food chain just goes completely up. We had something like 400 lbs. of game fish in some of your backwater areas or better. They are highly productive, but once you cut them off from your source of backwater, then production immediately goes down and your aquatic weed problems begin to develop. That's what happened in every lake that's been built in the State of Louisiana.

FROM THE FLOOR: I was going to suggest that you find out on that gravel by my boathouse. I'm going to build me a channel out through the channel.

THE CHAIRMAN: Gentleman, in the back.

FROM THE FLOOR: Mr. Smith...what was the problem six years ago didn't concern people then why did they

call on the Wild Life and Fisheries to come in and help them.

MR. SMITH: Well, of course, we assume it was a problem and it is still a problem.

FROM THE FLOOR: (Inaudible)

MR. SMITH: Well, of course, you would probably have to lower the water in the lake and that would create a permanent drawdown situation as far as most of the camps were concerned. You are getting into an engineer's area here about how often would the Red River back up or how high it would have to be to get back in the lake and how many years would it get back in there.

These conditions, of course, we think are ideal when you've got backwater areas. We can name you quite a few of them. The Larto Lake country back over there. Spring Bayou backwater county. Some of this has had problems lately. Red River backwater. Atchafalaya - this is one of biggest backwater areas in the State of Louisiana and we think was producing about a half a million pounds of crayfish daily last year and this the basic item of all your fishing.

FROM THE FLOOR: (Inaudible)

MR. SMITH: We will certainly. We hope we can work out something like this. I know everybody here wishes we could, too, here. Yes sir.

FROM THE FLOOR: This drawdown for the last six years has been experimental yet it is a complete failure.

MR. SMITH: No sir, I didn't admit it was experimental. I didn't admit it was a failure because..

FROM THE FLOOR: Why not leave the lake alone for at least 2 or 3 years and experiment again.

MR. SMITH: Well, we can probably tell you what will happen. I don't go out here and pull the plug.

FROM THE FLOOR: We are not interested in --. We want results.

MR. SMITH: O. K. If you don't lower it, well.

FROM THE FLOOR: Well, I can't tell you what's happening on the other part of the lake only my immediate front yard. I live there. I live on the east side of the lake on the north end. This year, I can't get a hook through the moss. So this is all I can say.

MR. SMITH: I see, well, you could fish off the pier last year. Well, this of course, was during the drawdown period and after one year it hasn't been drawn down and particularly in shallow waters this is where we maintain. Of course, the vegetation has increased so severely and not only in shallow water but in some of the other areas where this particular plant, this milform occurs, then it did decrease in some areas, like the gentleman had at the houseboat.

We think that if you allow the water to remain there, that's what we are saying, this is going to slow

the, referring back to the conditions that existed before draw-down and they were kind of bad.

FROM THE FLOOR: Sir, isn't it a fact that monies accumulated for in these wildlife preserves in South Louisiana for mineral rights is dedicated to wildlife and fisheries preservation in the State of Louisiana. Each year the legislature groups this fund with the general fund.

THE CHAIRMAN: I would really rather not get into that. I think he's directing that question to me. We've been having that fight since time was sir.

MR. ANGELLE: Excuse me. I maybe can answer this for the gentleman. In 1952, the Legislature adopted and passed a bill now law which allows Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission to budget all their monies that is not being robbed at this time which means approximately 2½ million dollars more for our purposes this year. This is a commitment made to the sportsmen , to the hunters of the State of Louisiana by Governor Edwin Edwards and the Legislature backs him up. This was adopted in 1972. This year is the first year that we will be able to retain the money that has been robbed prior to that which is a total of about 56 million dollars in a period of about 7 or 8 years.

FROM THE FLOOR: We can kill a lot of moss with that money. (Laughter)

MR. ANGELLE: Well, it's not here any more.

FROM THE FLOOR: (Inaudible)

MR. SMITH: I don't know if it would be enough muddy water. Charlie, do you know anything about that?

MR. CHARLES HOENKE: This thing has been proposed before and we even went so far as to have the Department of Public Works look into it and they tell us that every gravel pit was opened at one time that it wouldn't muddy down far enough that you would even see it. Of course, it looks bad now when it gets in there it trickles out 12 months out of the year. If it did this, well, it would be too muddy to fish but they tell us that this big slug of water when it hit the lake proper would only muddy about 3 inches deep and for some few short miles, it wouldn't be far at all.

THE CHAIRMAN: Charlie, tell them who you are and who you are with.

MR. HOENKE: Charles Hoenke. I'm a Lake Management Project Leader for the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Are there any more questions? If not, Mr. Don Wille would like to make a statement or have something to say. Don.

MR. DON WILLE: I would like to introduce at this time a representative of the Bistineau Lake Improvement Association, Dr. Dowden. He is formerly with LSU and at one time worked, I believe, with the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission. Dr. Dowden, would you care to say a few words.

DR. DOWDEN: I got my degree from L. S. U. in zoology in water pollution control. I worked with Mr. Bob LaFleur. I think some of you know Mr. LaFleur. He is one heck of a good biologist. I understand the problems of the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission. I sat here trying to draw some data from all these questions and so forth. See, I'm no longer a working biologist.

I have another position now which I considered a better opportunity. I worked for about 2 years getting the Lake Bistineau research station completed. For some reason it failed. I think that's the basis of the whole problem. In checking here, if I were back in teaching I could take 25 graduate students and keep them busy for 25 years on problems that came up here. The cycle, for example, of the drawdown - what happens there. Why no more sport fish. The effects of lights in all parts of the lake. Effect on the feed from the rivers. The distribution of moss and such things as this. There are a few conclusions I would like to point out to you.

Not that I am more qualified than the men over here because they are good biologists. They are very competent. They are using probably the best methods that are available. But the methods are not good enough. More research is needed. This research is not being conducted and frankly it's

your fault. If the research is not conducted it costs money and it's the fault of the people here. I'm not saying this because I don't have anything to do with it except I was asked to come by some friends because of my background. Why have not the people here been insisting on this research. More biologists for the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries, or from L. S. U., such things as this.

The data here I don't think it has been published. There is no comparison. No comparative data. So that someone else can the -- or check it out. Sometimes bias enters in when a biologist runs a test and this is the reason that the data needs to be published, to be checked. There is a dire need for further research because the lake is dying. In fact, I don't think it is a management problem anymore. I think it is a water pollution problem. I want to ask a few questions, technical questions, I was wondering about but will forego those at this time. I don't know, it would seem that the drawdown has not been effective. I don't know that it will be effective in the future. I was just wondering if Mr. Trygg would be interested in the dumping of waste from camps and houseboats in a drawdown lake. That's about all I have.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you Dr.

Gentlemen, I believe we have just about covered most of the aspects. I know we could go into much more depth. I want to assure everyone

here that regardless of the outcome of this problem that we have here that the Wild Life and Fisheries are trying to help. We have no other motive than to try to help with Board and this Commission. We are as someone just said, we are between a rock and a hard spot but that's why we took the job. We took that job to get between the rock and the hard spot. I imagine that at this time we might as well make some conclusion. We have all heard the evidence or would you like to recess and come back or what would be the wishes of the Board at this time. Well, I guess I might ask at this time what would be the pleasure of the Board. Does anyone have any--?

MR. WILLE: I would like to make a recommendation that we delay the lowering of Bistineau for 45 days and at that time try to make the improvements on the lake.

THE CHAIRMAN: Would you like to put that in a form of a motion.

MR. WILLE: Yes sir. That is in the form of a motion.

THE CHAIRMAN: As I understand your motion is to delay the drawing down of the lake for 45 days.

MR. WILLE: Right.

THE CHAIRMAN: And at that time, draw it down.

MR. WILLE: Right.

THE CHAIRMAN: From today. September 4th which is the original schedule.

MR. WILLE: Right.

THE CHAIRMAN: We know today is the 5th. Thank you, sir, but that was the day we originally was supposed to have started the drawdown. The 45 days would be calculated from the 4th.

MR. WILLE: And at that time, Jimmy, then we pursue doing the improvements that are needed on the lake.

THE CHAIRMAN: All right. I have a motion. Do I hear a second to the motion. Mr. Dupuy.

MR. MARC DUPUY: I would like to make a substitute motion. By way of preface, I would like to say that what we all like to hear is a consensus opinion and certainly we haven't heard that today.

THE CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry I was talking. What was that again, Marc?

MR. DUPUY: I said I would like to preface my remarks by saying that before making a substitute motion that we all would like to have had a consensus opinion. We haven't had that unfortunately. Some want, of course, immediate draw down. Some want no draw down at all. Some propose the solution of introducing carp as controls. Some chemical controls. Some grass cutting control. I wish there was a solution that would be easy and dependable. I think all of us have the long time

interest, best interests of the lake in mind and I would hope that we could begin a drawdown but a delayed drawdown that hopefully would allow some more enjoyment of the lake by those who feel that drawdown is detrimental and at the same time accomplish and it all, of course, depends on weather. But I would like to suggest a drawdown beginning no later than October 1st and 20 days from that time would-- this would be a 25 day delay in the drawdown beginning. It would approximate October 21st for a completion or reaching the 7 ft. drawdown period on or about the 10th of October. It would only be halfway drawn down so that a lot of inconvenience would not result until the last ten days or so, and, of course, if rains fall in that period of time it may make it impossible to accomplish a drawdown at all. So, I would like to put in a form of a substitute motion a drawdown beginning not later than October 1st.

MR. CLAY LUTTRELL: I second the motion.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have a motion and a second that the drawdown of the lake not commence until October 1st of this year. I have a second. Do you have any comments?

We have a call for a question. All those in favor, will you signify by saying aye. Those opposed by the same sign. I had better have a show of hands and I think I have it two to one. May I have a show of hands of all those in favor of the motion. All right. Now those opposed.

Alright Gentlemen. Be it so ordered that the drawdown will be stalled until October 1st. Is there anything else to come before the Commission at this time?

FROM THE FLOOR: What day will it be closed back?

THE CHAIRMAN: I don't know about their closing them back.

FROM THE FLOOR: (Inaudible)

THE CHAIRMAN: January 15th, sir.
January 15th.

(Text of the resolution is here made a part of the record.)

WHEREAS, considerable public interest has been expressed to delay the drawdown of Lake Bistineau until October 1, 1973.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission hereby approves the above delay in opening the gates on Lake Bistineau until October 1, 1973.

THE CHAIRMAN: If there is no other business to come before the Commission, do I hear a motion that we adjourn.

MR. WILLE: I make a motion that we adjourn.

MR. LUTTRELL: Second.